

## Message Text

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ACTION SY-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 FBO-02 A-01 /017 W

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P 161233Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2356

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0663

ATTENTION: A/SY, A/FBO, NEA/EX

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, ABLD, AFSP

SUBJ: ASSIGNMENT MARINE GUARDS AND SEABEES FOR CHANCERY  
CONSTRUCTION SITE, PROPERTY NO. 02446

REF: A. BEIRUT OM DATED 12/30/74

B. BEIRUT 13690

1. BY REFERNCED OM THE EMBASSY ALERTED THE DEPARTMENT (A/SY/FO) THAT CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BEIRUT CHANCERY WOULD HAVE PROGRESSED SUFFICIENTLY BY FEBRUARY 1, 1975, TO JUSTIFY ASSIGNMENT OF BOTH CONSEC SEABEES ANDD MARINE SECURITY GUARDS. SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT NOW INDICATE THAT ASSIGNEMENT MARINE GUARDS AT THIS TIME WOULD BE UNWISE FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. BASED ON DISCUSSION WITH COL. HANI ABBAS, DEPUTY CHEIF OF LEBANESE G-2 AND OFFICER IN CHARGE LEBANESE SECURITY DETACHMENTS AT EMBASSY INSTALLATIONS, RSO DETERMINED THAT THIS RESPONSIBLE SECURITY OFFICIAL BELIEVES PRESENCE MARINE AT CONSTRUCTION SITE, WHICH IS NEAR MAR ELIAS PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP, WOULD INCREASE RISK OF KIDNAPPING, SHOOTINGS, AND OTHER POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES. HE MENTIONED THE INABILITY OF BOTH EMBASSY AND LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES TO REACT QUICKLY TO TROUBLE AT SITE DUE TO ITS RELATIVE ISOLATION, AND HIS CONCERN OVER PUBLIC'S REACTION TO PRESENCE ARMED AMERICANS AT SITE AND FROM RUMORS THAT MIGHT DEVELOP ABOUT EMBASSY'S INCREASING

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ITS MILITARY COMPLEMENT.

2. I BELIEVE LEBANESE SECURITY GUARDS, I.E. GERDARMERIE OR MILITARY, SHOULD BE ASSIGNED IN LIEU OF MARINE GUARDS AT CONSTRUCTION SITE AT LEAST FOR PRESENT. GOL, ACCORDING TO COL. ABBAS, QUITE WILLING PROVIDE ADEQUATE GUARDS. THIS ALSO WOULD PUT RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTION OF SITE SQUARELY ON GOL WHERE IT PROPERLY BELONGS.

3. FOR ABOVE REASONS, I REQUEST THAT ASSIGNMENT MARINE GUARDS AT CONSTRUCTION SITE BE DEFERRED UNTIL SHELL OF BUILDING IS BASICALLY COMPLETED AND THEIR PRESENCE ESSENTIAL TO PRECLUDE SURREPTITIOUS ENTRY OF BUILDING AT NIGHT AND AT OTHER TIMES WHEN CONSTRUCTION STOPS AND SEABEES NOT PRESENT.

4. REGARDING ASSIGNMENT SEABEES, EMBASSY CONSIDERS THEIR EARLY ARRIVAL MOST IMPORTANT AND STRONGLY RECOMMENDS EVERY EFFORT BE MADE FOR THEIR ARRIVAL WITHIN NEXT 30-45 DAYS. ALSO, EMBASSY HOPES THAT CPOIC JAMES ORCHARD WILL RECEIVE HIS PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED EXTENSION AND BE DESIGNATED AS HEAD SEABEE CONSEC TEAM. IN ADDITION TO HIS PROVEN QUALIFICATIONS, HIS REMAINING IN BEIRUT WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE HOUSING OF OTHER MEMBERS SEABEE TEAM SINCE ALL, I.E., FOUR MEN, COULD BE BILLETED IN HIS QUARTERS. SINCE SEABEES WILL WEAR CIVILIAN CLOTHING AND WORK IN DAYTIME, TOGETHER WITH CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL, THEIR PRESENCE WOULD APPEAR TO POSE NO PROBLEM AS WOULD PRESENCE OF ARMED AND UNIFORMED MARINE SECURITY GUARDS.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY TELEGRAPHIC RESPONSE THIS MESSAGE INCLUDING ETA SEABEE TEAM.  
GODLEY

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## Message Attributes

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